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# Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women**
**Sixty-first session**

**Summary record of the 1307th meeting***
Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 7 July 2015, at 10 a.m.

*Chairperson:* Ms. Hayashi

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Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (*continued*)

*Combined third to seventh periodic reports of Senegal*

* No summary record was issued for the 1306th meeting.

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*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women** (*continued*)

*Combined third to seventh periodic reports of Senegal* (CEDAW/C/SEN/3-7; CEDAW/C/SEN/Q/3-7 and Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation of Senegal took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Mr. Sene** (Senegal) said that Senegal had ratified nearly all relevant international and regional conventions, an expression of its will to promote human rights, the autonomy of women, and the emergence of strong female leadership. He welcomed the favourable comments of the Working Group on Discrimination against Women in Law and Practice, which had recently paid a visit to Senegal and had noted the country's progress in implementing international and legal instruments for the protection and promotion of women's rights.

3. Having established the elimination of gender-based violence as a priority, the Government of Senegal, with the assistance of United Nations specialized agencies, had launched a programme, based on standard operating procedures, for the prevention of violence and the protection of victims.

4. Recent noteworthy events included the inauguration of the new Support and Assistance Centre for the Rehabilitation of Women with Fistulas, which had been held on the International Day to End Obstetric Fistula; and the ratification, by the President of Senegal, of the ILO Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183).

5. The Government was committed to the promotion of parity in decision-making processes; accordingly, a law had been adopted, in 2010, requiring absolute parity between men and women in fully or partially elected bodies. The National Observatory on Parity had been set up to monitor the implementation of gender equality and the effective implementation of the parity law, and the Electoral Code had been revised accordingly. As a result, the number of women representatives in the National Assembly had almost doubled since the previous election. On the local level, the number of women in elected posts had tripled.

6. The Government had also taken measures to strengthen social protection mechanisms. In 2013, it had launched the universal health-care coverage programme, and had begun providing financial and family security grants to households. In 2014, it had established a community-based programme for persons with disabilities, and another disabilities programme which dispensed "equal opportunity cards" for medical care, equipment, education and training, inter alia.

7. An operational action plan had been established to promote youth employment, and a national forum had been held on the subject. The Government had also recently launched the Community Farmland Programme, which was aimed at making agriculture the primary source of employment in Senegal, and a catalyst for economic growth.

8. For the protection of children and other vulnerable groups, the Government intended to strengthen legal, institutional and administrative measures for responding to children's needs, and to promote the correct use of the legal instruments already in place. It also intended to develop an action plan on child marriage.

9. Overall, Senegal had made important advances in combating discrimination against women; with the participation and support of partners in civil society and the private sector, it should be possible to ensure adherence to international standards.

*Articles 1 to 6*

10. **Ms. Schulz** noted that the prompt ratification, without reservations, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women by the Government of Senegal had attested to its commitment to human rights for women. She also observed that the authorities were engaged in a constant dialogue with civil society in the search for solutions to acknowledged problems. She regretted, however, that Senegal had not submitted a periodic report to the Committee since 1994.

11. The Convention had been integrated into the national constitution, and therefore had constitutional status. And yet, there was a gap between international commitments and the discriminations that remained entrenched in the national laws, especially in the Family Code. Moreover, there were many discriminatory societal practices, despite the existence of egalitarian laws.

12. She wished to know, in that regard, what measures were in place to inform women, whatever their social class and age, of their rights under the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto. In addition, she wondered what strategies were in place to provide training and awareness-raising to all members of the judiciary about the rights of women, and to tackle the problem of sexual bias. In view of the absence of any procedures for determining the unconstitutionality of discriminatory laws, she enquired whether the Government had envisaged allowing women's organizations to defend the rights of women before the courts, in civil, criminal, administrative and labour-related matters.

13. Taking note of efforts to restore "A" status to the Senegalese Human Rights Committee, she asked whether the Government would ensure its independence, provide it with funding, and allow it both to bring cases of discrimination before the courts and to play a role in the legislative process.

14. She wondered whether the Government planned to expand its network of community justice centres ("maisons de justice"), and to empower them to bring cases before the courts. She also wished to know whether the Government had a precise schedule for reviewing discriminatory provisions, especially the Family Code, given that the Committee had stressed the urgency of such a review as far back as 1994.

15. **Ms. Wade** (Senegal) said that the Government had summarized the Convention to make it more understandable, and had then translated it into the national languages; it had been distributed to ministries and civil society organizations. Emphasis had been placed on distributing it to both rural and urban women, all of whom needed to know their rights.

16. Recently, workshops had been organized for persons dealing with victims of gender-based violence.

17. **Mr. Seye** (Senegal) said that a department had been set up to raise awareness about international conventions and agreements, including those related to the rights of women. A concerted effort was being made to inform citizens of their rights, women's rights in particular.

18. Concerning the question about the constitutionality of national laws, he said that any woman who deemed a law to be unconstitutional could file a challenge through the Constitutional Council. He had no statistics, however, on cases of women who had done so.

19. The Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure had been reformed. Civil society associations that wished to challenge the constitutionality of laws in the courts could now do so; no such situations had yet arisen. Considerable attention had been paid to that matter, since the women who participated in those associations were aware of the issues affecting their rights. It was important to recall that the literacy rate in Senegal was high, in comparison with other developing countries; there were many well-educated women in Senegal interested in the rights of women.

20. The draft revised Family Code was currently circulating among the ministries, which were expected to give their views.

21. The Senegalese Human Rights Committee had the task of promoting and defending human rights and raising awareness with regard to those rights. That body was being reorganized, and in the future would be called a commission. It would be independent, well-funded, and financially autonomous.

22. The Government of Senegal had been receiving communications from other African countries that wanted to learn more about its network of community justice centres ("maisons de justice"). The question as to whether the community justice centres might be permitted to bring proceedings before a court on behalf of individuals was worth considering, as was the question whether non-governmental organizations should also have that power. Currently, it was the public prosecutors that made decisions to refer cases for trial, and to apply the law concerning violence against women. In his view, the Senegalese judiciary was sufficiently aware of those issues.

23. Much had been done to bring national legislation into conformity with the Convention. In particular, the code on children's rights had been reviewed, and discriminatory provisions revised. The Government fully agreed that the Family Code was not aligned with the Convention, and that there were flaws in the provisions on marriageable age, arranged marriages, and corporal punishment, among others.

24. **Ms. Schulz** said that she wondered whether, in the view of the delegation, the adoption of a law incorporating the definition of discrimination contained in the Convention would attract public attention to the concept of discrimination against women.

25. She also wished to know if individuals and associations were entitled to challenge the constitutionality of administrative or civil provisions, or only provisions of the Criminal Code.

26. She observed that the absence of cases in which women challenged the constitutionality of discriminatory laws might well be related to the lack of legal aid for persons without resources.

27. **Mr. Seye** (Senegal) said that it might indeed be advisable to incorporate the definition of discrimination contained in the Convention verbatim. He read out article 1 of the Convention, observing that that provision was not, in fact, reflected in Senegalese domestic law, although discrimination was punishable on other grounds.

28. In general, the public considered discrimination against women to be a matter of beatings and blows; it would be interesting to ponder that popular misconception when revising the national laws.

29. Individuals and associations were currently empowered to challenge only criminal provisions; thought would be given to expanding that power to the area of civil and commercial law.

30. He said that 400 million CFA francs had been earmarked for legal aid in criminal cases. If the Committee had received reports of widespread rape in Senegal, it should be aware that the courts prosecuted alleged rapists vigorously.

31. **Ms. Gabr** said that she was aware that the State party was highly conscious of its image and very concerned about fulfilling its obligations under international conventions. For that reason, she urged the delegation members to do their utmost to persuade their colleagues in the Government of the importance of adopting the necessary bills and legislative amendments. The Senegalese authorities should also bear in mind that they could count on the Committee's follow-up mechanism, as part of which States parties were asked to report on progress in given areas within two years.

32. **Ms. Niang** (Senegal) said that Senegal was concerned less about burnishing its image than about meeting its commitments. Consequently, laws in all areas were undergoing a thorough review to determine what worked and what did not. Even though Senegal had not incorporated into law the definition of discrimination exactly as it appeared in the Convention, it had acknowledged the existence of discrimination in a number of areas. The gap between what was stated in the Convention and what appeared in the Constitution of Senegal was not very wide. Discrimination in Senegal was multidimensional, insofar as it tended to affect poorer or lower-status women more severely.

33. **Ms. Pomeranzi** said that it was well known that women acted as agents of development in Senegal but that it was not entirely clear to what extent the various ministries were committed to implementing measures to ensure the full development and advancement of women. In that connection, she wondered whether the Ministry of Women, Children and the Family was in a position to begin work on ensuring that gender issues were mainstreamed in the other principal ministries. She also wondered how the Ministry's small Directorate for Gender Equity and Equality could really do effective work in all areas of the country. More information on the Ministry's ability to advance the cause of gender equality would be welcome, as would information on the results of joint exercises with the Ministry of Justice with a view to drawing up a budget for programmes to combat violence against women and children.

34. **Ms. Haidar** said that legal and political measures alone were not sufficient to attain true equality between men and women. Temporary special measures, provided for by article 4 of the Convention, could therefore be taken to help States parties achieve de facto equality. Those measures could include aid programmes, resource allocation or redistribution programmes or even hiring preferences. She called on the State party to consider taking such temporary special measures, which were fully explained in the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 on article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention (Temporary special measures). Although those measures were commonly seen as providing a remedy for past discrimination, they could also be taken to combat current and multidimensional discrimination. Lastly, she wished to know whether the State party was considering taking such measures either in the context of the Emerging Senegal Plan or as part of efforts to achieve equality in such areas as higher education and access to land.

35. **Ms. Niang** (Senegal) said that in 2004–2005 Senegal had developed a national strategy on gender equality to combat discrimination against women and girls in all areas, with a special emphasis on school enrolment. Among the special measures that Senegal had taken, often with the encouragement of civil society organizations, was the Act on Gender Parity.

36. **Ms. Wade** (Senegal) said that the Directorate for Gender Equity and Equality's move to the Ministry of Women, Children and the Family did not prevent it from fulfilling its mandate, which involved coordinating inter-agency efforts to implement the National Strategy for Gender Equity and Equality. Despite the difficulties of coordinating such cross-cutting efforts, a plan to implement the strategy had been drawn up that provided for the creation of gender units to encourage the

mainstreaming of gender issues in various ministries. The Ministry of the Armed Forces, for instance, had made great efforts to ease conditions of service for women in the Senegalese Armed Forces. The Ministry of Higher Education and Research, for its part, was taking special measures to encourage women to pursue post-secondary studies.

37. The coupling of the National Strategy for Gender Equity and Equality and the Emerging Senegal Plan, which was currently under way, was a process involving grass-roots organizations, civil society, financial and technical partners and government ministries. That participatory approach had been taken to address the real problems encountered by the people of Senegal. It would in all likelihood lead the authorities to take some of the temporary special measures mentioned by Ms. Haidar.

38. **Ms. Thiam** (Senegal) said that the Ministry of Women, Children and the Family had a number of programmes to help women escape poverty. The Integrated Economic and Social Development Programme 2012–2015, for example, worked for the advancement of women and girls in eight local authorities in the Kaolack and Dakar regions. Vocational training and literacy programmes had been set up in rural areas, and the Ministry managed a number of funds to finance women's micro-enterprises. The Ministry had developed action plans to accelerate the shift away from harmful traditional practices. An assessment of the results of those plans was still necessary, however.

39. **Ms. Diallo** (Senegal) said that one of the pillars of the Emerging Senegal Plan was the promotion of human capital. As a result, many of the plan's flagship programmes, such as the development of departmental training and assistance centres for women, targeted women and girls. Legal aid was available at those centres to support women who wished to file complaints against persons who subjected them to violence.

40. The Act on Gender Parity had been adopted as a result of joint efforts made by civil society, the Government and technical partners. The National Observatory on Gender Parity, an independent body, bore responsibility for ensuring that the Act was enforced. Sixty-four women, nearly twice as many as previously, had won seats in the legislature in the most recent legislative elections. On the rare occasions when electoral lists were not evenly divided between men and women, it appeared to be because the lists had an odd number of candidates. It was true that the Act was implemented in a cultural, religious and political context that sometimes entailed resistance, but the Government's determination to increase women's participation in decision-making bodies was real. Indeed, only one week earlier the National Assembly had amended one of its rules of procedure to ensure that requirements for gender parity applied to its Bureau.

41. **Mr. Seye** (Senegal) said that a gender unit had also been established in the Ministry of Justice.

42. **Ms. Pomeranzi** said that it was her understanding that the joint efforts of the Ministry of Women, Children and the Family and the Ministry of the Economy and Finance to draw up a budget for women's issues had been discontinued. She wished to know whether they were to be resumed.

43. **Ms. Pimentel** asked to what extent the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Women, Children and the Family were working together to ensure that judicial and law enforcement personnel were appropriately gender-sensitive.

44. **Ms. Niang** (Senegal) said that Senegal had implemented a social protection policy and had collaborated with the Italian Government in that regard. The policy had provided grants to women from disadvantaged backgrounds in order to help them

overcome financial and schooling difficulties. The Government had also developed a National Social Protection and Risk and Disaster Management Strategy which focused on reforming the social security system.

45. **Ms. Ba** (Senegal) said that, through the universal health coverage policy, measures had been taken to provide free social protection to disadvantaged women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities. Efforts had been made to combat maternal and infant mortality, such as by sending midwives to the most remote areas of the country. Certain health services had also been made free of charge, including caesarean sections, family planning, and childbirth in specific areas of the country. Preliminary evaluations of health-care institutions and systems had indicated that gender was not being sufficiently taken into consideration and, consequently, the Government intended to address the issue.

46. **Ms. Wade** (Senegal) said that, regarding the issue of gender-sensitive budgeting, efforts in that field would be strengthened through the establishment of the General Directorate responsible for the planning of economic policies. Once the General Directorate was fully operational, it would be mandatory for all projects to be sensitive to the issue of gender in order to receive funding from the State party.

47. **Ms. Al-Dosari** said that she would like to know what measures had been implemented to combat harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, what kind of awareness programmes were in place to address such issues, what efforts had been made to prohibit the practice of polygamy, levirate and sororate marriages, food prohibitions and repudiation, and finally what reforms had been made to the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure regarding such practices.

48. **Ms. Gabr** said that female genital mutilation was a social practice and was not to be mistaken as a religious practice. It would be useful to know what was being done to encourage women to report cases of domestic violence, to encourage society as a whole to talk about such issues, and what the Government was doing to strengthen the financial and human resources of the National Observatory on Parity in order to fulfil its role as a monitoring body for cases of domestic violence. A comment on whether Senegal intended to introduce a law or national strategy to combat domestic violence would also be appreciated, as would any information on efforts to train members of the judiciary and law enforcement agencies to overcome inherited stereotypes.

49. **Mr. Seye** (Senegal) said that considerable efforts had been made, by both the State and civil society organizations, to train law enforcement and judicial officials on the issue of discrimination and violence against women. Since 2012, the Ministry of Justice had become more active in preventing violence against women through the establishment of a directorate for criminal affairs which had brought such issues as female genital mutilation (FGM) to the fore. The directorate had conducted a nationwide assessment, funded by UNICEF, of FGM practices and had proposed legislative measures to combat them. Non-governmental organizations were also involved in providing training to legal personnel, an example being Justice Rapid Response, which would shortly be holding a seminar on methods of investigating sexual crimes. Furthermore, the Ministry of Justice had organized a think tank on the issue of violence against women, and the Government's rigorous approach to domestic violence was illustrated by the fact that, if even a judge were to be convicted of such a crime, a suspended sentence would be impermissible.

50. **Mr. Sene** (Senegal) said that it was perhaps the rigour of national laws that prevented women from reporting cases of domestic violence because of the consequences that the imprisonment of their husbands would have on their families and the upbringing of their children. Nonetheless, the severity of the law in itself

demonstrated that Senegal was a country that was willing to do all it could to protect women.

51. **Ms. Niang** (Senegal) said that all ministries in Senegal were alert to the issue of impunity given its cross-cutting nature. Regarding funding, the State set aside a substantial annual sum to implement the Act on full gender parity. However, there was still a funding shortfall in certain areas and, although all ministries earmarked a certain amount for gender policies, there was no mechanism for calculating the total amount available across all ministries and how to make effective use of it. Funding was also provided through partnerships with international organizations, such as the United Nations Development Fund for Women, and with foreign States, such as Italy, but such funding was primarily accorded as a follow-up to measures already implemented by Senegal and not as a means of promoting gender equality.

52. **Ms. Thiam** (Senegal) said that two action plans had been conducted on the issue of female genital mutilation (FGM). The first had produced positive results, while the second, aimed at implementing a zero-tolerance approach to excision by 2015, was in the process of being evaluated. Senegal had also developed a national strategy to eliminate FGM, and had adopted Act No. 99-05 prohibiting excision, although the latter had not yet been enforced due to the unwillingness of victims to come forward and report crimes. With regard to gender-based violence, a joint programme to combat gender-based violence and promote human rights (2013–2015) had been initiated in collaboration with United Nations specialized agencies. Standard operating procedures had been developed for the programme with the aim of applying them nationally in order to provide a consistent response to gender-based violence. Importantly, Senegal was engaging in a debate that had previously been considered taboo, which was a sign of progress in itself. Finally, many studies were being conducted to take stock of the situation regarding gender-based violence.

53. **Ms. Ba** (Senegal) said that "Badienou Gox" was an important community programme that addressed a number of issues, including female genital mutilation (FGM) and reproductive health. The programme consisted of training women from local communities to act as intermediaries between their communities and the health system in order to facilitate communication and awareness-raising at grass-roots level. The programme had proven to be successful in the field of family planning in particular. The same community model had more recently been used to involve men in the solution of gender-based issues, including family planning, reproductive health, and the prevention of HIV and FGM. Both religious and political leaders were also very much involved in awareness-raising work with communities in order to encourage them to engage with the justice system as a response to gender-based violence.

54. **Ms. Jahan** said that, despite the existence of the national plan to combat trafficking in persons, Senegal remained a country of origin, transit and destination for the trafficking and prostitution of women and children. The gap between legislation and enforcement was a result of the lack of understanding concerning the gender-sensitive nature of such issues. She asked what measures were being taken to ensure sufficient human and financial resources for the implementation of the national plan and whether Senegal intended to incorporate a definition of the trafficking of women into the Criminal Code and the Act on human trafficking in accordance with the Palermo Protocol. She also wished to know whether stronger measures were being taken to identify trafficking victims, such as prostitutes and domestic workers, whether law enforcement officials were being trained to provide assistance to victims and to appropriately investigate, prosecute and punish offenders, what safeguards were in place to encourage victims to report cases, and whether adequately resourced labour inspectorates had been established to monitor cases of trafficking. Internet marriages,

and forced labour. In addition, a comment would be appreciated on victim assistance measures in place, such as the availability of shelters for women and access to justice and medical welfare, as well as measures for the rehabilitation and reintegration of female victims. Disaggregated data, particularly pertaining to the number of prosecutions of cases of trafficking, forced begging in Koranic schools, and officials complicit in such crimes, were also needed.

55. More information was also needed on prostitution in Senegal, such as the number of prostitutes detained for not being legally registered, action taken to prevent pimping in accordance with section 323 of the Criminal Code, measures to reduce the HIV prevalence rate among prostitutes, which stood at almost 20 per cent, and measures to reintegrate former prostitutes into society.

56. **Mr. Seye** (Senegal) said that obtaining sufficient financial and human resources for the implementation of the national plan to combat trafficking in persons was a complicated task that was taken seriously by the Senegalese Government. As part of the work of revising the Criminal Code, consideration was being given to adopting a definition of trafficking in women. A hotline had been set up to assist in victim identification. Moreover, the police were stepping up their enforcement response to trafficking, as was demonstrated by the investigation and imprisonment of persons involved in the organization of a trafficking network between Senegal and Lebanon. Statistics pertaining to the trafficking of women in particular were not available but, more generally, in 2008, out of 100 cases of violence against women, 47 had not come to trial because of a lack of evidence.

57. The Government acknowledged shortcomings in its response to human trafficking. There was no reparation mechanism for victims and, under current legislation, financial compensation was payable by offenders, who were sometimes insolvent. There was a lack of victim support centres and of awareness among women of their rights. Moreover, no independent complaints mechanism had been established specifically for cases of human trafficking. The Government would take account of the many recommendations it had received in its efforts to address the situation.

58. In reply to other questions, he said that there were plans to amend the law governing the working conditions of domestic workers and that, in 2013, the Government had adopted a comprehensive national child protection strategy to complement existing measures aimed at eradicating child begging.

59. **Ms. Siby** (Senegal) said that parliament was discussing a bill to modernize Koranic schools (*daaras*), provide a framework for religious education and put an end to the exploitation of vulnerable children.

60. Prostitution was legal and regulated. Unregistered prostitutes were a danger not only to themselves but also to the wider population, which was why steps were being taken to refer them to sexual health clinics, where they could receive advice and, if necessary, appropriate treatment.

61. **Ms. Niang** (Senegal) said that vulnerable children were offered support by, among others, the Department for the Protection of Children's Rights and the Ginddi centre, which had set up a three-digit hotline for street children and victims of abuse. Child begging was an issue that transcended national borders and, as such, required a coordinated response at the subregional and regional levels. In Senegal, progress was being made in terms of awareness-raising, including with the help of marabouts, and the Government was open to seeking radical solutions in cooperation with international partners.

62. **Mr. Sene** (Senegal) said that most of the child beggars in Senegal were from neighbouring countries and that the Economic Community of West African States

(ECOWAS) as a whole had a responsibility to control the cross-border movement of persons. The fact that Senegal was a Muslim-majority country and that compulsory giving was one of the pillars of Islam made begging particularly effective and therefore harder to combat. Nevertheless, President Macky Sall was determined to eradicate the practice.

63. **Mr. Seye** (Senegal) said that, in 2011, only 10 cases of forced begging had been prosecuted, which suggested that the 2005 law prohibiting the practice was poorly enforced. There was, however, a strong political will to get children off the streets and into school.

64. **Ms. Pimentel** asked whether it was true that, in some cases of domestic violence against women, judges imposed suspended sentences on perpetrators in response to victims' requests for clemency. If so, the delegation should indicate whether the State party had considered alternatives to imprisonment as a means of ensuring that there was no impunity for domestic violence.

65. **Ms. Schulz** asked whether the State party had conducted a study on the effectiveness of regulations governing prostitution. Noting that the World Health Organization was opposed to mandatory HIV testing and counselling, she asked how many women were imprisoned in Senegal for the offence of soliciting or for failing to meet requirements for prostitutes, such as carrying a valid sanitary card and submitting to HIV testing twice a month. The delegation should indicate whether the regulation of prostitution had contributed to overcrowding in women's prisons and dissuaded prostitutes from registering with the police.

66. **Ms. Gabr** enquired about the role of the Ministry of Women, Children and Female Entrepreneurs in combating discriminatory practices and attitudes, and asked how the National Observatory on Parity performed its task of monitoring, evaluating and making proposals for promoting parity between men and women.

67. She invited the delegation to comment on the rising incidence of rape in Senegal, which was punishable by imprisonment of only 5 to 10 years under article 320 of the Criminal Code. The delegation should also provide statistics on female genital mutilation (FGM).

68. **Ms. Jahan** asked what agreements had been concluded at the subregional level to address the issue of child begging, what was being done to curb the growth of sex tourism and what specific measures were being taken to prevent trafficking in women.

69. **Mr. Seye** (Senegal) said that, in cases of domestic violence, judges were not permitted to hand down suspended sentences or grant pardons. Appeals for leniency from victims did not stop the judicial authorities from punishing perpetrators. Steps had been taken to raise awareness of domestic violence among all religious communities and school textbooks were being redrafted to remove gender stereotypes. A number of agreements on child begging had been concluded at the subregional level but had not yet proved effective.

70. **Ms. Siby** (Senegal) said that the leaders of ECOWAS countries had resolved to introduce regulations on child begging, and that foreign nationals found to be promoting the practice in Senegal could be deported. The prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS in Senegal was relatively low and prostitutes, many of whom came from disadvantaged backgrounds, did not feel stigmatized. The availability of regular testing allowed them to seek appropriate treatment whenever necessary.

71. **Ms. Niang** (Senegal) said that cultural and social factors dissuaded prostitutes from registering with the police more than regulations, which had enabled women to receive treatment for sexually transmitted infections. The Minister for Women, Children and Female Entrepreneurs sought to ensure that discrimination was not

tolerated and that victims of violence had access to support centres throughout the country. The Government had implemented a National Strategy for Gender Equity and Equality in the period 2005–2015 and was formulating a new strategy that would be at the heart of the Emerging Senegal Plan, thereby ensuring that gender equality policies were not marginalized.

72. **Ms. Thiam** (Senegal) said that, as national programmes to prevent female genital mutilation (FGM) were multisectoral, they were implemented by the Ministry of Women, Children and Female Entrepreneurs in close cooperation with other government ministries, civil society organizations, development partners and youth networks. Discussions were under way to set up a national council to coordinate existing regional policies on FGM. According to the 2014 Demographic and Health Survey, the FGM prevalence rate stood at 11 per cent for girls aged 0–4, 21 per cent for those aged 5–9 and 25 per cent for those aged 10–14.

73. **Mr. Sene** (Senegal) said that the National Observatory on Gender Parity played an important role in promoting equality within the National Assembly, as was evidenced by the adoption of a law in that regard in June 2015. Sex tourism was not at all encouraged and accounted for only a small proportion of all tourism in Senegal. During the peak season for seaside tourism, prostitutes from neighbouring countries exercised their right to freedom of movement within the ECOWAS region and flocked to coastal resorts in Senegal, but the police were on hand to maintain order and fight crime.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*